

Five Wanderers fight for fitness

WYCOMBE HOPES HINGE ON INJURIES

WYCOMBE Wanderers chances of beating Cheshunt in the Amateur Cup, first round tomorrow (Saturday) will largely depend on the Blues' injury list which includes no fewer than six of the 16 strong squad.

None of the injured players are definite certainties and three leading men — Tony Horseman, Derek Gamblin and Johnny Hutchinson — are regarded as doubtful.

Mick Cooper and Dave Bullock seem to be in with a better chance but one certainty not to play is goalkeeper John Maskell, who on top of breaking his shoulder recently, is now suffering from a bout of 'flu.

The most serious of the injuries must be Horseman. With Keith Searle leaving for Hendon last week, much of the responsibility upfront will be on 'Bodgers' shoulders and Wanderers manager Brian Lee must be banking on him being fit for tomorrow. Tony suffered a thigh injury in the game against Carnegie College.

VALUABLE

Derek Gamblin and Johnny Hutchinson (both ankle injuries) are also valuable members of the side while Mick Cooper's overlapping this season has prompted several Wycombe goals. Dave Bullock's versatility could see him drafted into the side at any position from full back to midfield.

One piece of good news, though, is the return of Mick Hollifield, who seems certain to come back into the side, having recovered from a week in bed with 'flu. He may well make up a front line with Horseman (if fit) and Tony Amos. If Horseman is unable to play Larry Pritchard could well move upfront. Much will depend on Thursday night's training session.

Brian Lee saw Cheshunt draw 2-2 at Maidenhead recently and rates them as "a competent side".

"Playing under a new manager and at Loakes Park is bound to motivate them," he said. "They are an above average Athenian League club with one or two strengths and weaknesses. But if we are prepared to work hard, we can win."

The state of the pitch at Loakes Park could well have a

lot to do with the final result. It is bound to tear up and although light in the forward line, Wanderers could have some problems at the back where turning will be difficult.

It was just over six years ago when Cheshunt last visited Wycombe and received the sort of hammering that made them glad not to have been back since. That occasion was the fourth qualifying round of the F.A. Cup when Wanderers won 8-0. Cheshunt were obviously

overawed by the occasion, the crowd and the type of football Wycombe produced.

DIFFERENT

It could well be different tomorrow. Cheshunt are now an established Premier Division Athenian club, the crowd may be less than the 3,000 on that nightmare afternoon and Wycombe are still struggling to find their top form this season.

In that game in 1966 Cheshunt missed a couple of chances in the first nine minutes

— and were never in it after that. Keith Samuels hit the first Wanderers goal, Tony Horseman (2) and Paul Bates banged in three in nine minutes midway through the first half, and by the final whistle Horseman had added two more to his tally and Bates and Brian French had brought the total to eight.

Cheshunt now have an entirely different team from that painful day, but on the Wycombe side John Maskell and Horseman still remain with the club.

Cheshunt's form has been only average so far this term. During the close season they lost half their first team squad to more fashionable local rivals like Bishop's Stortford and Harlow, while some followed ex-manager Jimmy Quail to Hornchurch.

New manager Bill Moye (who played left back six years ago and got quite a roasting from Len Worley) found himself left with a bunch of talented but inexperienced youngsters and virtually no older, battle-hardened players.

A couple of experienced defenders — Sharkey and Marjoram — returned to the club after a couple of months and with young strikers Twigg and O'Donoghue starting to bang in some goals, results were not as bad as had been forecast.

However they were not good enough for Bill Moye to keep his job, and he was replaced by ex-Ilford and St. Albans boss John Drabwell.

Since his arrival Cheshunt have only lost once in six outings, and this still predominantly young side five teenagers in the squad of 14 for tomorrow's game) are beginning to believe in themselves.



JOHNNY HUTCHINSON
... ankle injury.



DEREK GAMBLIN
... ankle injury.



TONY HORSEMAN